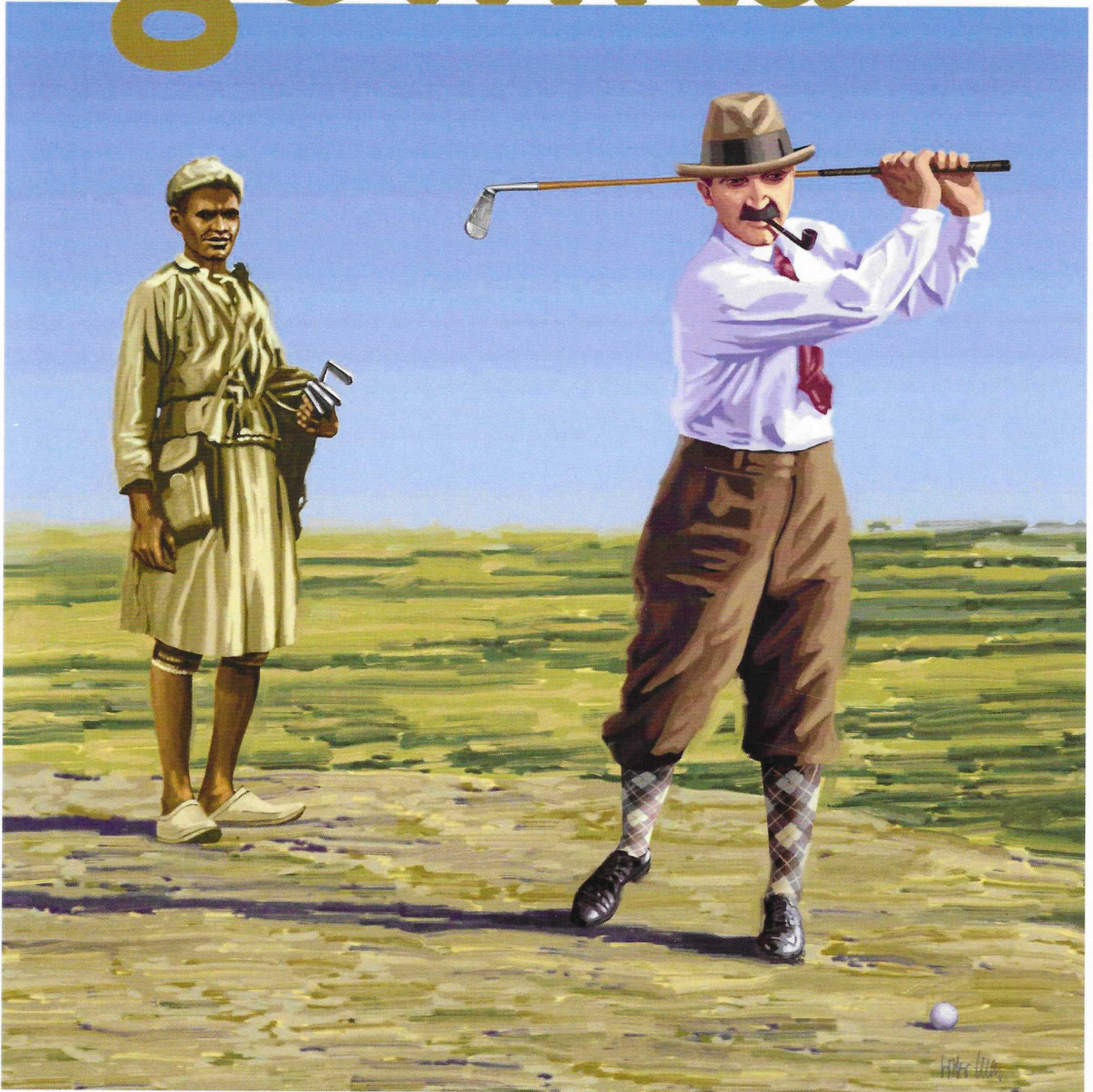


# golfiga

no.34  
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2024



the magazine of the european association  
of golf historians & collectors



N°34 – Autumn  
2024

The European Association of Golf Historians & Collectors  
EAGHC

# Golfika



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The front cover of *Golfika* magazine N°34 shows an illustration by Viktor Cleve. It features Gustave Golias with a caddy on the Marrakech golf course.

Viktor Cleve is a EAGHC honorary member and a leading golf painter from Germany. As a former art director, Viktor kindly designed the cover page for *Golfika* magazine.

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**A Golf History told by Objects:  
Silver Cup of the Privat-Golfclub  
Nordsee-Sanatorium Südstrand-Föhr**

*by Dr. Frank Biller*



**A** GOLF TROPHY WAS AUCTIONED OFF IN AN ONLINE SALE BY THE PLÜCKBAUM AUCTION HOUSE at Bonn at the end of October 2021. The elegant cup, crafted in 800 silver, measures 17 cm in height and weighs around 200 g. The auction began with a bid of 100 euros. The final hammer price was 160 euros.

The silver cup<sup>17</sup> was created in the studio of Hugo Böhm in Schwäbisch Gmünd, as the hallmarks on the cup reveal. In the 1920s and 1930s, Schwäbisch Gmünd was a centre of the precious metal trade with several important manufacturers<sup>18</sup>. Hugo Böhm also produced a silver plate for the Golf und Landklub Münster (1930-1939), which is still played for as a challenge cup for the Golfclub Münsterland in Burgsteinfurt, north of Münster.

The inscription on the silver trophy from Föhr refers to the private golf club of the Nordsee Sanatorium Südstrand Föhr. More than one hundred years ago, the physician Dr Karl Gmelin founded a sanatorium on the south beach of the North Sea island, where he wanted to heal patients primarily through a healthy lifestyle without alcohol and with a vegetarian diet. This also included regular exercise. For example, the sanatorium had its own fitness studio with a range of sports equipment. As plenty of exercise in the fresh air was also recommended. The construction of the sanatorium's own golf course fitted well into the picture.<sup>19</sup>



*Silver trophy (Credit: Auktionshaus Plückbaum GmbH)*

<sup>17</sup> <https://katalog.plueckbaum.de/produkt/0348-pokal-silber-800-hugo-boehm/> (last accessed on 04.11.2021).

<sup>18</sup> H.W. Bächle, *Das Edelmetallgewerbe in Schwäbisch Gmünd*, 1983.

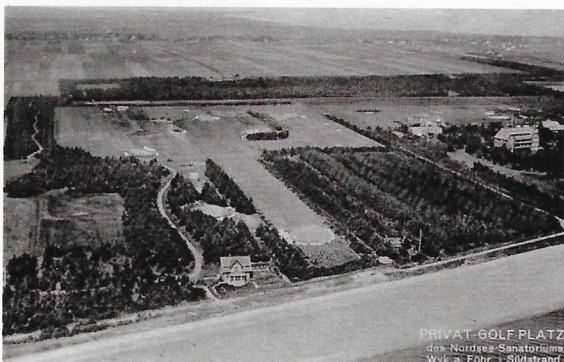
<sup>19</sup> Andreas Bell, *Zeitreise: Das Nordseesanatorium von Wyk auf Föhr*, 2021

[https://www.ndr.de/fernsehen/sendungen/schleswig-holstein\\_magazin/zeitreise/Zeitreise-Das-Nordseesanatorium-von-Wyk-auf-Foehr.zeitreise3300.html](https://www.ndr.de/fernsehen/sendungen/schleswig-holstein_magazin/zeitreise/Zeitreise-Das-Nordseesanatorium-von-Wyk-auf-Foehr.zeitreise3300.html) (last accessed on 04.11.2021).

Together with his brother-in-law Carl (Charly) Mensendieck, the director of the sanatorium, Gmelin in 1925 decided to build a golf course. The idea probably came from Mensendieck, who had learnt about the game of golf in an Indian prisoner of war camp.<sup>20</sup>



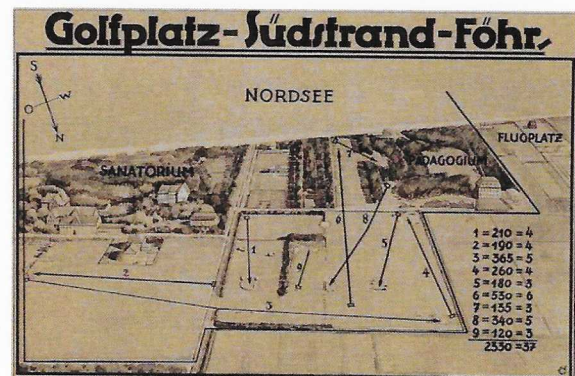
Publicity of the Hugo Böhm factory, Schwäbisch Gmünd. (Credit: <https://immortalis.livejournal.com/391766.html> (last accessed on 04.11.2021).



Postcard: aerial view of the golf course. In the centre, one can see the long sixth hole. (Credit: Ch. Meister).

The German golfing pioneer and golf course architect Bernhard von Limburger was commissioned to build the course. Mensendieck

became the first chairman of the golf club and was to have a decisive influence on the development of golf on the holiday island until his death in 1963<sup>21</sup>. In addition to his role as director of the sanatorium, he also ran the boarding school close by, where pupils and patients of the sanatorium were introduced to golf. In this way, a youth golf centre was started without any official support of the German Golf Association.<sup>22</sup> Later many successful German golfers emerged out of this institution.<sup>23</sup>



Course layout (Credit Ch. Meister).

The nine-hole course was completely opened in 1927. The course had been laid out in the direct neighbourhood of the sanatorium, on the side facing away from the North Sea. The entire course was 2,330 m long and consisted of three par-3 holes, three par-4 holes, two par-5 holes and a par-6 hole. The unusual par-6 and sixth hole had a length of 530 m. It led through a forest corridor, between the sanatorium and the so-called Pädagogium (boarding school), directly to the south beach. From there one played back to the short seventh hole, only 135 m in length. Bernhard von Limburger described this course as follows on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the golf club in 1935:

<sup>20</sup> Bernhard von Limburger: *Zehn Jahre Golf auf Wyk*, from: *Deutsche Golfzeitung* XI-Heft 12 (1936) p. 15 .

<sup>21</sup> See 90 Jahre Golf auf Föhr S. 111ff. <https://docplayer.org/30165605-Jetzt-mit-27-bahnen-110.html> (last accessed on 04.11.2021).

<sup>22</sup> See *Gehobene Gesellschaftsspiele, Nobles Bädergolf* in: Dietrich R. Quanz, Volker Kluge, Christoph Meister: *100 Jahre Golf in Deutschland*, Vol. 2 *Glanzzeiten/Schattenseiten 1924-1949*, Oberhaching 2007, p. 6-27 esp. p. 18-19.

<sup>23</sup> Here Bernhard von Limburger reports: 'Even though the course was originally intended primarily

for the spa guests, the interesting fact soon became apparent that great enthusiasm for golf was awakened in the educational centre, which was also run by Director Mensendieck. There were years in which over eighty pupils played golf, and some of today's famous golfers emerged from them. This encouragement of young people is an achievement that Charly Mensendieck and his wife, who have both become good golfers themselves, must never be forgotten.' Bernhard von Limburger: *Zehn Jahre Golf auf Wyk*, from: *Deutsche Golfzeitung* XI Heft 12 (1936) p. 15.

Nevertheless, there are quite a few difficult holes, especially the scenic short hole by the sea, where you have to play onto a green that is cut out of the forest.<sup>24</sup>

Hardly any special obstacles were created, because here on our North Sea coast the wind, the most beautiful of all obstacles, was already enough to make the game more difficult!<sup>25</sup>

The location of the golf course next to the sea was supposed to be reminiscent of Scottish links courses, unfortunately the dunes that would have justified such a designation were missing.<sup>26</sup>

Golfers much appreciated the fresh sea air, the sound of the North Sea and the cries of the seagulls as they spent relaxing hours away from the hustle and bustle of the big cities. The club did not charge membership fees but was financed exclusively by donations.<sup>27</sup>

A distinctive feature of the course was the multiple crossings of the fairways by roads. While car drivers and golfers hardly came into conflict in the early years, this changed after the Second World War, when tourism on the island increased again.

In addition, the development of the town of Wyk expanded in the 1950s, so that the area became the focus of investors. After the sanatorium had already been closed during the Second World War and converted into a hotel, the golf course also had to give way to the demands of modern holiday guests and was abandoned in 1968.<sup>28</sup> Just three years later, Föhr Golf Club opened a new nine-hole course built on a neighbouring site, which has since been extended to 27 holes.

The second inscription which is on the base of the silver trophy provides information about the

donor of the prize: "donated by Hermann Reincke Hamburg." This benefactor was the Hamburg shipowner Hermann Reincke (1864 - 1943), the owner of the Rob. M. Sloman shipping company. Reincke was chairman of the Hamburg Golf Club from 1919 to 1938, which relocated from Hamburg-Flottbek to Falkenstein in 1930. He was also chairman of the German Golf Association from 1924 to 1928.<sup>29</sup> Another surviving prize was the Deutsche Reincke Pokal, which Reincke, as Honorary President of the DGV (German Golf Association) donated on the occasion of the German Championships in Berlin-Wannsee in July 1936. The German ladies were eliminated in the first rounds.<sup>30</sup>



Photo of the golf course with road crossing from 1967 showing Christoph Meister's grandfather (Credit: Ch. Meister)

It was the time of so-called spa golf, when golf courses were created by large landowners and spa administrations, particularly on the North and Baltic Seas, but also inland, such as in Bad Homburg, Baden-Baden, or Bad Ems. Under the umbrella organisation of the DGV, golf boomed and attracted sports enthusiasts from

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Kind notice from Christoph Meister, Hamburg.

<sup>27</sup> See *90 Jahre Golf auf Föhr* p. 113.

<https://docplayer.org/30165605-Jetzt-mit-27-bahnen-110.html> (last accessed on 04.11.2021).

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.; Christoph Meister: *Südstrand Golf Club, Föhr. (1927 - 1968)*

<https://www.golfsmissinglinks.co.uk/index.php/wales-2/germany/germany-north/1532-germany-sudstrand-fohr> (last accessed on 04.11.2021).

<sup>29</sup> *Gehobene Gesellschaftsspiele, Nobles Bädergolf* from: Dietrich R. Quanz, Volker Kluge, Christoph

Meister: *100 Jahre Golf in Deutschland, Vol. 2 Glanzzeiten/Schattenseiten 1924-1949*, Oberhaching 2007, p. 20-27 and p. 182; for the relocation of the Hamburg Golf Club from Flottbek to Falkenstein, see *ibid* p. 50; *100 Jahre Hamburger Golf-Club: Eine Biografie in Kürze* <https://www.golfclub-falkenstein.de/club/historie.html> (last accessed on 4.11.2021).

<sup>30</sup> See here Bernhard von Limburger: *Deutsche Meisterschaften. Wannsee, 20.-26. Juli 1936*. From: *Deutsche Golfzeitung XII-Heft 5 (1936)* S. 15-26.

the cities to the new courses.<sup>31</sup> This trend was also on Föhr and the open competitions attracted golfers to the island. One of these tournaments took place at Whitsun 1936. An advertisement in the *Deutsche Golfzeitung* (German Golf Newspaper) announced a total of five different competitions from 30 May to 1 June: including a flag competition over 18 holes (Eröffnungswettbewerb), a mixed foursome (Preis der Kajüte), a stroke play competition (Preis vom Südstrand) as well as a pitching and putting competition played over three holes.<sup>32</sup> Mrs Dabelstein from Hamburg, who had already won the mixed foursome together with her husband, won the competition against par. The *Deutsche Golfzeitung* reported in its issue of 15 June 1936, that the course was in excellent condition during Whitsun, and that the many new features of the course “proved their worth.” The article ended with an acknowledgement:

*We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Mr H. Reincke, Hamburg-Falkenstein, for the challenge cup donated to us, which Mrs Dabelstein won for the first time this year.*<sup>33</sup>

It is certainly not too far-fetched to see this “travelling trophy” as the silver trophy from the online auction of the Plückbaum auction house. Hermann Reincke donated this trophy, commissioned to Hugo Böhm, in his capacity as chairman of the Hamburg Golf Club and as honorary chairman of the DGV, to the Privat-Golfclub Südstrand-Föhr as a challenge cup on the occasion of its Whitsun tournament in May/June 1936. It is possible that the good relations between the Hamburg golfers and the Privat-Golfclub Südstrand Föhr<sup>34</sup> or it was Reincke's personal interest in the island golf club's youth development work for the German Golf Association that led to this foundation.<sup>35</sup>

It is a great stroke of luck that this silver trophy survived the destructive period of the Second World War unscathed and has been passed down to the present day. The hope remains that the new owner of the cup is made aware of the significance of the Silver Cup for the history of the club and the early days of German golf. It would be appropriate if the historic golf trophy could be put on display, in a golf club or a golf museum, and so be accessible to the public.

**Privatgolfclub Südstrand - Föhr**

**Offene Golfwettspiele**

**vom 30. Mai bis 1. Juni 1936**

1. **Eröffnungswettbewerb**  
Flaggenwettbewerb m. V. über 18 Löcher
2. **Preis der Kajüte**  
Vierer m. V. als Zählwettbewerb über 18 Löcher
3. **Spiel gegen Einheit** m. V.
4. **Preis vom Südstrand**  
Zählwettbewerb über 18 Löcher m. V.
5. **Annähern und Einlochen** über 3 Löcher  
in 2 Klassen

Eventuelle Änderungen vorbehalten

Die Teilnehmer an den Wettspielen wohnen im Nordseesanatorium Wyk-Föhr, Südstrand. Volle Tagespension RM 8.— bis 12.— nach Lage des Zimmers incl. Benutzung des Golfplatzes. Rechtzeitige Anmeldung ist erwünscht. Näheres auf Anfrage bei Dir. C. Mensendieck.

*Advertisement for the Whitsun Tournament 1936  
(Credit: Deutsche Golfzeitung XII Heft 2 (1936).*

<sup>31</sup> With ref. to spa golf please see Heiner Gillmeister: *Deutsche Kurorte als Schaubühnen für die „English Sports“ Tennis und Golf*. From: STADION. Internationale Zeitschrift für Geschichte des Sports 44/1 (2020) p. 5-33.

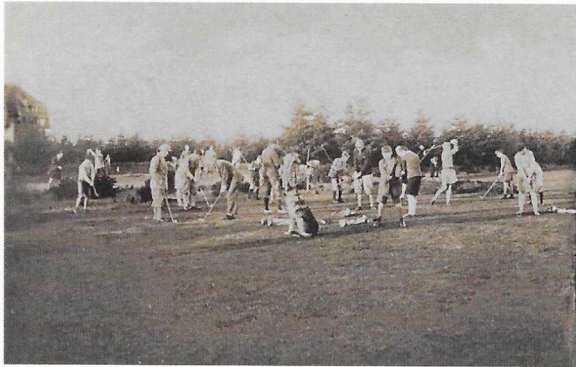
<sup>32</sup> See. *Deutsche Golfzeitung* XII-Heft 2 (1936) p. 3.

<sup>33</sup> *Deutsche Golfzeitung* XII-Heft 3 (1936) p. 46.

<sup>34</sup> A series of golf competition results from the Privat-Golfclub Nordsee-Sanatorium Südstrand-Föhr from the 1930s show regular participation by golfers from Hamburg. See for example *Deutsche*

*Golfzeitung* XII Heft 2 (1936) p. 43; *Deutsche Golfzeitung* XII Heft 3 (1936) p. 46.

<sup>35</sup> This interest is documented, among other things, by a photograph showing Reincke together with Carl Mensendieck as attentive observers of the youth training programme on Föhr Island. See *Gehobene Gesellschaftsspiele, Nobles Bädergolf* in: Dietrich R. Quanz, Volker Kluge, Christoph Meister: *100 Jahre Golf in Deutschland, Vol. 2 Glanzzeiten/Schattenseiten 1924-1949*, Oberhaching 2007, p. 18.



*These three images are arranged in this way to create a postcard showing children accompanied by adults on the Föhr golf course.*



*Two views of the clubhouse (inside, c. 1935) and outside (c. 1960)*

*A player driving from the 7th tee.*



*Golfplatz Abschlag 7.*